

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1 (canceled)

2 (currently amended): The article of claim 15 wherein said matrix polymer comprises polyester.

3 (original): The article of claim 2 wherein said polyester is selected from the group comprising poly(ethylene terephthalate), poly(butylene terephthalate), poly(1,4-cyclohexylene dimethylene terephthalate), poly(ethylene naphthalate) and amorphous glycol modified poly(ethylene terephthalate).

4 (currently amended): The article of claim 15 wherein said hydrophilic block comprises at least one member selected from the group of poly(alkylene oxide), poly 6, (2-ethyloxazolines), poly(ethyleneimine), poly(vinylpyrrolidone), poly(vinyl alcohol), polyacrylamides, polyacrylonitrile, polysaccharides and dextrans.

5 (currently amended): The article of claim 15 wherein said hydrophilic block comprises at least one member selected from the group consisting of poly(alkylene oxide), poly 6, (2-ethyloxazolines), polysaccharide, poly(vinylpyrrolidone), poly(vinyl alcohol), poly(vinylacetate).

6 (currently amended): The article of claim 15 wherein said hydrophilic block comprises poly(ethylene oxide).

7 (currently amended): The article of claim 15 wherein said hydrophilic block comprises polysaccharide.

8 (currently amended): The article of claim 15 wherein said hydrophilic block comprises poly(vinyl pyrrolidone).

9 (currently amended): The article of claim 15 wherein said hydrophilic block comprises poly(vinyl acetate).

10 (currently amended): The article of claim 15 wherein said matrix compatible block comprises polyester.

11 (currently amended): The article of claim 15 wherein said matrix compatible block consists of at least one member selected from the group consisting of polyester, acrylic, amide, polypropiolactone, poly β -butyrolactone, poly δ -valerolactone, poly ϵ -caprolactam, or polycaprolactone.

12 (currently amended): The article of claim 15 wherein said clay comprises smectite clay.

13 (currently amended): The article of claim 15 wherein said clay comprises synthetic smectite clay.

14 (currently amended): The article of claim 15 wherein said clay comprises layered double hydroxide clay.

15 (currently amended): An article comprising a matrix polymer and clay wherein said clay is intercalated with a block copolymer, wherein said block copolymer comprises a hydrophilic block capable of intercalating said clay and a matrix compatible block compatible with said matrix polymer.
The article of claim 1 wherein said block copolymer comprises three blocks.

16 (canceled)

17 (currently amended): The article of claim 15 wherein said block copolymer has the structure A-B-A, wherein A is a hydrophilic member selected from the group comprising poly(alkylene oxide), poly 6, (2-ethyloxazolines), poly(ethyleneimine), poly(vinylpyrrolidone), poly(vinyl alcohol), polyacrylamides, polyacrylonitrile, polysaccharides and dextrans and B

is an oleophilic member selected from the group comprising of polyester, polyacrylic, polyamide, polypropiolactone, poly β -butyrolactone, poly δ -valerolactone, poly ϵ -caprolactam, or polycaprolactone .

18 (canceled)

19 (currently amended): The article of claim 15 wherein said block copolymer has the structure A-B-A, wherein A is a member selected from the group comprising poly(alkylene oxide), poly 6, (2-ethyloxazolines), polysaccharide, poly(vinylpyrrolidone), poly(vinyl alcohol), poly(vinylacetate) and B is a member selected from the group comprising polyester, polycaprolactone, polyamide.

20 (currently amended): The article of claim 15 wherein said block copolymer comprises three blocks and said matrix comprises a copolymer compatible with at least one block of said copolymer.

21 (currently amended): The article of claim 15 wherein said block copolymer comprises three blocks and said matrix comprises a blend of polymers compatible with at least one block of said copolymer.

22 (currently amended): The article of claim 15 wherein individual polymers in the blend of copolymers are compatible with separate blocks of said copolymers.

23 (currently amended): An article comprising a matrix polymer and clay wherein said clay is intercalated with a block copolymer, wherein said block copolymer comprises a hydrophilic block capable of intercalating said clay and a matrix compatible block compatible with said matrix polymer
The article of claim 1 wherein said matrix compatible block comprises 50 to 500 monomer repeat units of caprolactone and said polymer matrix comprises polyester.

24 (currently amended): The article of claim 15 wherein said block copolymer further comprises a block that does not intercalate clay.

25 (original): The article of claim 24 wherein said block copolymer that does not intercalate clay comprises polyester

26 (currently amended): The article of claim 15 wherein said block copolymer further comprises a block comprising an oleophilic polymer.

27 (currently amended): The article of claim 15 wherein the ratio by weight of clay to block copolymer is between 1 : 99 and 99 : 1.

28 (currently amended): The article of claim 15 wherein the ratio by weight of clay to block copolymer is between 80 : 20 and 60 : 40.

29 (currently amended): The article of claim 15 wherein said clay has an aspect ratio of >10:1.

30 (currently amended): The article of claim 15 wherein said article is a support.

31 (currently amended): The article of claim 15 wherein said article is a layer in a multilayer structure.

32 (currently amended): The article of claim 15 wherein said clay comprises a weight % less than 70%.

33 (currently amended): The article of claim 15 wherein said clay comprises a weight % less than 20%.

34 (new): The article of claim 23 wherein said polyester is selected from the group comprising poly(ethylene terephthalate), poly(butylene terephthalate), poly(1,4-cyclohexylene dimethylene terephthalate), poly(ethylene naphthalate) and amorphous glycol modified poly(ethylene terephthalate).

35 (new): The article of claim 23 wherein said hydrophilic block comprises at least one member selected from the group of poly(alkylene oxide), poly 6, (2-ethyloxazolines), poly(ethyleneimine), poly(vinylpyrrolidone), poly(vinyl alcohol), polyacrylamides, polyacrylonitrile, polysaccharides, (2-ethyloxazolines), poly(vinylacetate), and dextrans.

36 (new): The article of claim 23 wherein said hydrophilic block comprises poly(ethylene oxide).

37 (new): The article of claim 23 wherein said hydrophilic block comprises polysaccharide.

38 (new): The article of claim 23 wherein said hydrophilic block comprises poly(vinyl pyrrolidone).

39 (new): The article of claim 23 wherein said hydrophilic block comprises poly(vinyl acetate).

40 (new): The article of claim 23 wherein said clay comprises smectite clay.

41 (new): The article of claim 23 wherein said clay comprises layered double hydroxide clay.

42 (new): The article of claim 23 wherein said block copolymer comprises three blocks.

43 (new): The article of claim 23 wherein said block copolymer has the structure A-B-A, wherein A is a hydrophilic member selected from the group comprising poly(alkylene oxide), poly 6, (2-ethyloxazolines), poly(ethyleneimine), poly(vinylpyrrolidone), poly(vinyl alcohol), polyacrylamides, polyacrylonitrile, polysaccharides, and poly(vinylacetate).

44 (new): The article of claim 23 wherein said block copolymer further comprises a block that does not intercalate clay.

45 (new): The article of claim 23 wherein the ratio by weight of clay to block copolymer is between 1 : 99 and 99 : 1.

46 (new): The article of claim 23 wherein said clay has an aspect ratio of >10:1.

47 (new): The article of claim 23 wherein said article is a support.

48 (new): The article of claim 23 wherein said article is a layer in a multilayer structure.

49 (new): The article of claim 23 wherein said clay comprises a weight % less than 70%.

50 (new): The article of claim 23 wherein said clay comprises a weight % less than 20%.